The Illocutionary Acts of the Characters in Wonder A Novel by R.J. Palacio

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Abstract

This research discusses the use of illocutionary acts uttered by the characters in Wonder a novel by R.J. Palacio. It explores how the acts of illocutionary are conveyed by the characters in the whole novel. The purpose of this study is to find the type of illocutionary acts uttered by the main characters, the intended meaning of utterances, and the character's purposes in using such assertive. This research applies the pragmatics theory about speech acts to analyze the use of illocutionary acts in conversations. This study is qualitative research and it uses document as the source of the data that is Wonder a novel by R.J. Palacio. The result of this study shows that there are four types of illocutionary uttered by the characters. The types of illocutionary acts are assertive, commissive, directive, and expressive. Those utterances have the intended meanings that are influenced by the context of the situation in every phenomenon.

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1 Introduction

Speech acts have been found in the language of communication. The speech act is a product of an utterance under certain conditions and the smallest of the communication language that determines the meaning of the sentence. A speech act is a pragmatic element that involves a speaker, listener, or reader. In its application, speech acts used by several disciplines (Austin, 1975; Bach & Harnish, 1979). The terms of speech act appear because the speakers utter something not merely stating speech, but also have the intent behind utterance. On any occasion, the action performed by producing an utterance will consist of three related acts, the first elocutionary act, which is the basic act of utterance or producing of meaningful linguistic expression. Second is the illocutionary act, the intended meaning of the utterance by the speaker. The third is the perlocutionary act the action that results from the locution. Communicating with other people can be done in various ways in which one of them is done by speech. Speech is an activity of public speaking or giving speeches to express their opinions or give an idea about something. Speech is usually performed by a person who gives speeches and statements about some things/events that are important and should be discussed (Fin *et al.,* 1995; Dreyfus, 1992). A speech produce by the speaker must have purpose and function, which is addressed to the listener to convey information to the listener. In the speech, acts are the type of speech act that has the intent and function to inform something, which illocutionary speech acts (Bach, 1999; Halliday & Hasan, 1985). In illocutionary speech act is subdivided into five types of speech acts in illocutionary is assertive, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative.

As in daily conversation, a conversation that happens in a novel can be one of the objects to be analyzed because the novel is the reflection of social life. On this occasion, this study concerns the use of illocutionary acts produced by the characters in Wonder a novel by R.J. Palacio. This study is a research about a novel called Wonder with the main character named Auggie who has a genetic disorder called Mandibulofacial Dysostosis, so he got a lot of abuse from his classmates at school (Juliarta, 2020; Guo *et al.,* 1998; Kitamura *et al.,* 1993).

In this novel many obvious phenomena happen and make the characters produce various speech acts in a variety of events, such as suggesting, refusing, complaining, thanking, and promising which pragmatically indicate the illocutionary acts (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Lillesand *et al.,* 2015; Laforest, 2002). The characters in this novel seem to have different intentions by uttering the illocutionary utterances which are influenced by the context of the situation. Therefore, this study is conducted to know the types of illocutionary acts by the characters, the intended meanings of utterances, and also the speakers' purposes in uttering assertive utterances (Martin *et al.,* 1999; King *et al.,* 1998).

Regarding express the feelings, people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structure, but also certain acts performed via those utterances. The speaker normally expects that the actions performed through the utterance will be recognized by the hearer. After that, the hearer can give the response as the effect of utterance that has been uttered. One of the functions of the speech act is to convey information to others.

2 Materials and Methods

According to Searle (1969), the illocutionary act was an act performed in saying something. In other words, the illocutionary act could be defined as used as a sentence to perform a function. The Illocutionary act was the real action that was performed by the utterance. The first is the first type of lexical interference is how the speaker fails considering the polysemous character of a word and their choice from all the possible meanings is inappropriate (Searle, 1979; Searle, 1977; Yule, 1996). Searle's classifying illocutionary act into five types: Assertive is an illocutionary act that represents a state of affairs. E.g. stating, claiming, hypothesizing, describing, and telling. A directive is an illocutionary act for getting the addressee to do something. E.g. ordering, commanding, daring, defying, challenging. Commissive is an illocutionary act for getting the speaker (i.e. the one performing the speech act) to do something. E.g. promising, threatening, intending (Krippendorff, 2018; Geoffrey, 1983; Levinson, 1983). Expressive is an illocutionary act that expresses the mental state of the speaker about an event presumed to be true. E.g. congratulating, thanking, deploring, condoling, welcoming, and apologizing. Declaration: an illocutionary act that brings into existence the state of affairs to which it refers. E.g. blessing, firing, baptizing, bidding, passing sentence, excommunicating.

This study is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research-based on descriptive data without using quantification and statistical procedures (Mackey and Gass, 162-163). This research uses a document as the source of the data that is a novel titled Wonder by R.J. Palacio. Furthermore, the utterances that indicate illocutionary acts are

given highlight and rewritten to get clear data. The data consist of 193 utterances. From the data that have been gained, the utterances are classified based on the types. Then it is analyzed further to know the intended meaning, the reasons, and the way main characters produce utterances that are influenced by the context.

3   Results and Discussions

The result of this study shows that there are 193 illocutionary utterances uttered by the characters in Wonder a novel by R.J. Palacio. Illocutionary acts are categorized into some types namely assertive, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative. There are 55,91% directive illocutionary acts, 20,43% expressive illocutionary act, 9,14% assertive illocutionary acts, 4,84 commissive illocutionary acts and 9,68 declarative illocutionary acts.

a. Assertive

Auggie: "Okay, How to build an organic battery made of potatoes. Now, that's cool. It says here you could power a lamp with it. We could call it the Spud Lamp or something." (page 129)

Analysis:

Auggie suggests to Jack about their project from school, Auggie says that they can make an organic battery made from potato to power the lamp. This utterance was included in assertive illocutionary acts and classified as suggesting.

b. Commisive :

Auggie: "I promise I'll tell you all about it later when Dad and Via come home. I'll tell you all every detail." (page 193)

Analysis:

Auggie promises to Mom that he will tell about everything that is happened in his summer camp after Dad and Via come home. This utterance was included in commisive illocutionary acts and classified as promising.

c. Directive

Ms. Petosa: "Okay, kids, okay, everybody! Settle down. Now, the first thing I want everyone to do is to stop talking and put your backpacks down and quiet down." (page 34)

Analysis:

Ms. Petosa commands all the students in her class to stop talking, put the backpacks down, and be quiet. This utterance was included in directive illocutionary acts and classified as commanding.

d. Expressive

Mr. Tushman: "Thanks so much for coming, guys—especially since the school doesn't start until next month!" (page 23)

Analysis:

Mr. Tushman says thank you to Julian, Jack, and Charlotte because they come to school on holiday to meet a new student named Auggie. This utterance was included in expressive illocutionary acts and classified as thanking.

e. Declarative

Auggie: "I'll go next year," (page 16)

Analysis:

Auggie says that he wants to go to school next year when he ready physically and mentally. This utterance was included in declarative illocutionary acts and classified as deciding.

4   Conclusion

Based on the result of this research that had been done, it would be concluded that directive is illocutionary speech acts most frequently used in Wonder a novel by R.J. Palacio it was quite reasonable because, in this novel, there are many commands from mother, father, and teacher for children and students, especially for Auggie. Research on illocutionary speech acts in this speech was continuing research, because this research some various viewpoints or reviews was needed to be analyzed. The researcher suggests this research needed to be done next in understanding illocutionary acts in a speech to generate a more perfect study. It was intended to provide information that was clear about the shape and purpose of illocutionary acts. It was recommended that further research needed to be done in

stages so that were the results obtained broader and deeper by used one right approach, particularly in analyzing illocutionary acts in a speech.

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